

Hi my name is _____ and this is the 8th principle minute. With the adoption of the 8th Principle, our congregation committed to dismantle racism, beginning within our walls.

As we work to dismantle racism in our institution, we are continuing our exploration of the attributes of White Supremacy Culture. Today we will look at Fear of Conflict.

To be more specific, it's fear of open conflict. People in power do not want conflict expressed. They try to ignore it or run away from it. When open conflict does occur the response is frequently to blame the person raising the issue rather than actually examining the problem. They are accused of being impolite or rude and can be implicitly or explicitly punished for raising the issue. A response to people angrily expressing an opinion is to be told to "calm down". As the internet meme instructs us, "NEVER in the history of calming down has anyone ever calmed down by being told to calm down."

The antidotes for this require significant changes to institutional culture as conflict needs to be seen as a valid means of transformative justice. There are many changes that can be undertaken, including:

- Plan for ways to handle conflict before it happens
- Distinguish between being polite and raising hard issues
- Don't reject discussing hard issues when raised in a way that can be seen as rude or disruptive
- Be transparent about power and decision making processes before engaging in conflict
- Engage a third party to support exploration of the conflict
- Once a conflict is resolved, review what happened to see how it might have been handled differently

Together we will continue this journey toward spiritual wholeness, build a beloved community, educate ourselves and discuss what it means to develop a culture of being accountably anti-racist. We will continue to look at our own practices, identity, and stories with a new lens to dismantle the racism in ourselves and our institutions.

<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/characteristics.html>
https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/museums/files/White_Supremacy_Culture.pdf

